

ABOUT GROWTH

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**WASHINGTON STATE
COMMUNITY, TRADE AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Building Foundations for the Future



Your comprehensive plan is done; now what do you do in UGAs?

Clark and Thurston counties have been working closely with the cities within these counties in planning for urban growth areas. Now that comprehensive plans are complete, what's next?

Clark County has zoned the vast majority of its rural residential lands at one unit per five acres. The majority of Clark County's growth, at the present time, is within unincorporated portions of the city of Vancouver's UGA. For future, long-term use, the county has designated urban holding zones, adjacent to other cities, with minimum lot sizes of 10 or 20 acres.

With these minimum lot sizes, the land will be held for urban development until services are available. "Without large minimum lot sizes until urban services are available, you stair step through a series of smaller lot sizes which is a very ineffective way to build urban density," said Craig Greenleaf, Clark County planning director.

The urban holding zones ultimately will be annexed to cities. The holding zones for Vancouver and Hazel Dell are fairly limited. Ridgefield's is extensive. Battle Ground and Washougal also have holding zones. In Camas, most of its UGA has already been annexed.

"Holding zones are a useful concept," said Greenleaf. "They transmit clearly to the development community and citizens the requisites needed before these areas can be fully developed."

The county and Vancouver are working on interlocal agreements to facilitate a smoother transition of county land into the city. The management agreements will include planning, law enforcement, transportation, and parks.

In Thurston County, a joint plan between the county and each city was prepared for the unincorporated UGA, except for the city of Olympia. With Olympia, the county and the city jointly adopted the parts of the Olympia plan that covered the UGA. All the joint plans were adopted as an element of the comprehensive plan for the county.

Three-quarters of the growth in the Thurston County will go into urban areas during the 20-year planning period. Most of the rural lands in the county are zoned at one unit per five acres.

The county is in the process of adopting most of the development standards for the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater to be administered by the county in each city's unincorporated UGA. The three cities and the county adopted a memo of understanding in December that provides the framework for joint zoning regulations.

The new system means developers will not need to talk to both the county and city about projects in the unincorporated UGA, said Don Krupp, director of development services for Thurston County. Three staff review teams are being formed, one for each city's unincorporated UGA. Each of these three teams also is geographically assigned to a portion of the county's rural area.

Thurston County will adopt the three cities' development standards, including streets, utilities, design standards for commercial and multi-family projects, and urban village classifications. Exceptions not included in the agreement are: critical areas, forest practices, subdivision ordinance, and design standards for high-density residential development.

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ABOUT GROWTH

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GROWTH

MANAGEMENT

The Next Generation

By Steve Wells

Assistant Director, Growth Management Services

Most of the local governments that have comprehensive plans due under the GMA now have draft plans prepared or their plans are adopted and in place.

You'll see evidence in this newsletter that growth management is moving into the next generation which says, "O.K., you've got your plan. Now what?"

In this newsletter, Clark and Thurston counties report on how they are working with cities in unincorporated urban growth areas. Olympia evaluates how it is going to pay for the capital facilities it needs for tomorrow's growth. The Puget Sound Regional Council tells about its transportation planning work. And Tacoma describes how the GMA is making a difference in that city.

For the few GMA communities who do not have plans, we offer our continued support to help you join the next generation of growth management planning.

The opponents of growth management recently characterized the growth manage-

ment "world" as being in a state of chaos. I have been saying, "Hey, wait a minute. There may be isolated instances in the state where progress isn't being made, but we shouldn't let that dominate our awareness of what is going on. What's really going on is largely compliance — at least satisfactory compliance, if not perfect compliance."

Take a look at statistics from the growth management hearings boards, for example. They show that, as of February 1996, of the 300 cases filed, only 56 have been returned to local governments for further work. More than 250 cases have been resolved and are in compliance. Only 12 percent of the cases have been appealed to superior court. Only seven cases have been recommended for sanctions. Only five cases have had findings of invalidity. Most cases are resolved in six months.

It is time to focus our energy and efforts on all the good work that has been done and start building on it.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NOTES

Congratulations to those who have completed and adopted a consolidated, integrated permit system by March 31, 1996. If you have not yet sent copies of your ordinances to CTED, please do so as soon as possible. If you need help, CTED has a notebook of information, including sample ordinances, available.

Adoption requirements, CTED copies. When adopting comprehensive plans and development regulations to meet GMA requirements, local governments need to adopt them by an ordinance that indicates they are being adopted under the GMA. This is an important step to reduce legal risks and stay eligible for certain kinds of state funding. Also, comprehensive plans and development regulations must be submitted to CTED within 10 days after adoption. Amendments need to follow the same process.

A reminder on ESHB 1724's docketing requirement. GMA local governments need to keep a list of suggestions by interested persons to be considered for possible amendments to comprehensive plans or development regulations. The docket needs to include any CTED suggestions not already included in adopted plans or ordinances.

Call CTED at (360) 753-2222 if you'd like more information on these growth management topics.

Utility puzzle coming together in Clark and Thurston counties

In Clark and Thurston counties, the zoning of much of the rural area at one unit per five acres helps make a clear distinction between where rural and urban services are provided.

"We believe that by five acre zoning we are creating a largely permanent rural landscape," said Craig Greenleaf, Clark County planning director. "The county has had a history of 1 and 2-1/2 acre densities. With residential development at those scales, we've had areas in the county largely indistinguishable from urban areas. We made a choice to make a sharper distinction by lot size."

Clark County's utility providers served on the steering committee that created its GMA comprehensive plan. Utility services are provided in the county by some of the cities, the Clark County Public Utility District, and water and sewer districts. About 180 square miles in the county is served by the PUD.

Now that the county's plan has been adopted, utility providers are reexamining their utility rate structures so they are less dependent on future growth being the primary driver for economic success, Greenleaf said.

The county's utilities objective is to get urban services in place throughout unincorporated urban growth areas. Utility service plans are being revised to coordinate with the GMA plan.

For rural utilities, the county had a policy making it compulsory to connect to a water system when rural development occurred. The policy didn't work, Greenleaf said, because there were too many factors involved. Now, the primary means to keep rural utility services at rural levels is through density. People who live in rural areas at lower densities will have to pay more, if they need water from piped systems.

Clark County is working on having a more collaborative process for dealing with annexations, Greenleaf said. "We

are trying to make sure that all of our service delivery systems are clearly in place and each jurisdiction's responsibility, county and city, are clearly spelled out."

In Thurston County, cities are the primary providers of services in the unincorporated UGAs of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. When growth occurs, the cities extend water and sewer service. The county is not a utility provider in those UGAs and provides limited sewer and water service to a few higher density communities outside the UGAs that developed prior to the currently adopted plan and zoning scheme.

"The county made a basic assumption that areas in UGAs will ultimately be annexed to each of the three cities," said Don Krupp, director of development services for Thurston County. "We support annexation of these areas into their respective cities."

When services are extended to contiguous areas outside city limits, all three cities require that residents sign an agreement to annex to the city.

In the small communities in southern Thurston County, the pace of development is generally slower. Most of the cities do not have sewer systems. They are looking at the costs of providing sewer services for future growth. The county also is working on a sewer and water system for the unincorporated Grand Mound UGA.

PERF grants announced

Local governments will benefit from about \$2.8 million in state grants funds for projects that feature examination of environmental issues when land use plans are prepared.

CTED is awarding grant funds for 24 planning projects benefiting 40 communities from the Planning and Environmental Review Fund. Some of the grants are for joint projects with more than one jurisdiction participating.

CTED is awarding Anacortes \$85,000 to prepare a subarea plan that addresses how economic development can occur along with environmental protection in the Fildago Bay area. Bremerton's \$40,000 grant will focus on developing a plan to revitalize the Charleston neighborhood, west of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

With its \$151,200 grant Olympia will prepare a plan and an environmental impact statement for the northern portion of its downtown area. Snohomish County will use its \$175,000 grant to combine environmental analysis with subarea planning as it prepares plans in urban growth areas. Spokane County and 10 of its cities are sharing a \$400,000 grant to prepare environmental impact statements for their comprehensive plans and accompanying rules.

In addition, CTED is recommending funding for these communities: Auburn, \$100,000; Bainbridge Island, \$117,000; Centralia, \$69,300; Chehalis, \$61,500; Ellensburg, \$19,300; Everett, \$90,000; Kent, \$150,000; King County, \$125,000; Lynnwood, \$50,000; Mill Creek, \$135,000; Pierce County, \$150,000; Seattle, \$177,000; Shoreline, \$100,000; Stevens County Small Cities Consortium, \$99,500; Sumas, \$98,880; Sumner, \$95,000; Tukwila, \$109,250; Tumwater, \$48,000; and Washougal, \$100,000.

The Battle Plan For Puget

The central Puget Sound region – King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties – with three million residents, is projected to have more than 1.1 million residents by 2020.

By Mary McCumber
Executive Director, Puget Sound Regional Council

Just as you wouldn't build a house without a set of plans, we couldn't adequately accommodate this kind of growth without proper planning. Collectively, we adopted VISION 2020 as our regional growth management, economic, and transportation strategy, and as the framework for county-wide planning policies and local comprehensive plans.

We recognize that it will take a long time to carry out regional planning. Both short-term and long-term results will be needed.



Follow-up is crucial. VISION 2020 and its transportation component, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, are the framework.

The MTP, completed last year, is our first comprehensive look at all aspects of our region's transportation system: roads, bridges, ferries, nonmotorized, and freight and goods movement. It provides two things: an assessment and a set of strategies.

The system performance assessment helps put the traffic congestion we all experience today in context.

During the evening rush hour, the average speed today on our freeways and arterials is about 26 miles an hour. That will drop to about 18 miles an hour if we maintain current trends. That may not sound like a dramatic

shift, but the result would be nearly four times as much delay on our freeways and major arterials in the year 2020, as we have today.

MTP strategies to address congestion include:

- Optimize the use of the transportation system. Maintain and improve what we've already invested in.
- Invest in transportation improvements that support land use objectives. Provide better street networks, transit serving neighborhoods, facilities for bicycling and walking, and fast, convenient transit between urban centers.
- Manage the demand for travel. Emphasize telecommuting, flexible work schedules, employee incen-

Sound Traffic Congestion



Photos/Puget Sound Regional Council

tives for transit and carpooling, and look at parking supply and cost.

Selectively expand transportation capacity to improve travel options. Complete links in the road network and in the high occupancy vehicle system, expand passenger ferry service, make improvements for freight and goods movement, and build a high capacity regional transit system.

The MTP assessment shows the only way to keep congestion from deteriorating significantly is to pursue all four of these strategies, in concert with VISION 2020's growth strategy, which calls for focusing growth in urban centers to preserve rural areas and open spaces.

Another way the council works to put the MTP strategies into practice is through the region's Transportation Improvement Program.

For the first time in 1995 the council funded some larger regional projects that in the past would not have been funded, because the pot would have been divided up to meet a variety of smaller, localized needs.

Over the next nine months, this region will be working with the state, counties, cities, transit agencies, and citizens to identify priority transportation needs for the next six years, as part of a statewide package for the 1997 Legislature.

This is significant because we are seeking, for the first time, to reach agreement among leaders throughout

the four counties, representing 56 percent of the state's population, on the top priority city, county, transit, and state transportation projects that need funding.

On the growth strategies side, the council is involved in efforts with its members to help carry out the concepts of VISION 2020. The council reviews local comprehensive plans and county-wide planning policies to ensure local, regional, and state plans are consistent and support each other.

We're also providing tools and assistance to help communities develop their "centers" and to develop a regional "green" spaces system, industrial land strategies, and a process for siting capital facilities of regional or statewide significance.

In addition, the council is developing a performance monitoring system to track specific measurements of transportation, land use, and economic changes.

This will result in the first regional report card this fall on how we're doing — to find out whether our regional strategies are working and see where additional actions are needed. ■

GMA grants aid work on plans, regulations

About two-thirds of the local governments receiving growth management incentive grants this year are using the funds to finalize comprehensive plans or development regulations or amend them, according to a preliminary CTED review of 189 grants.

In addition, 20 local governments are using their grants for urban growth area work, 19 for streamlining their permit systems, and 11 for capital facilities elements.

Incentive grants are funds appropriated by the Legislature last year to help local governments complete, improve, or implement specific GMA products or achieve compliance.

State rule changes underway

Two state committees are working on rule changes required by ESHB 1724. One committee is working on new shoreline management/GMA rules. The state Department of Ecology will hold public hearings in May and June on: 1) streamlining procedural rules; and 2) clarifying jurisdiction and definitions for wetlands, streams, and lakes. Final adoption is scheduled in July. A draft of the committee's new guidelines for updating shoreline master programs will be available this fall with adoption slated in December.

The State Environmental Policy Act/GMA committee has issued a guidance document and will have a report on its progress available in late April. Call Neil Aaland at (360) 407-7045 for further information.

The capital city's capital idea

By Brian J. Ziegler
Olympia Planning Commission Chair

Olympia's comprehensive plan represents a bold, new direction in the city's future. Higher densities, more diverse housing, liberal open space, and mixed uses are all part of the recipe. This shiny new plan carries a hefty price tag, however, and the Growth Management Act tells us we can't shy away from paying the bill.

The comprehensive plan is the script for a variety of private sector land uses. But the city also has a starring role to provide the parks, open space, pedestrian amenities, streetscapes, and nonmotorized facilities that are so important to Olympia's citizens. The tally for Olympia's six year capital facilities plan, however, is over \$108 million. That's a whopping \$500 annual bill for every Olympia resident. In an era of declining state and federal financial support, some question whether that level of investment is achievable.

"Olympia's residents have forged a doable vision," said Bob Jacobs, Olympia mayor, "and a practical capital facilities plan is one way to help make their vision a reality." That reality means some changes though, like developing CFP projects and balancing priorities based on comprehensive plan goals and policies. In the past, projects were generated by a whole host of somewhat independent interests and a consistency check with the comprehensive plan was more of an afterthought.

This year, the planning commission and city staff have committed to change the CFP process and format to improve its link to the comprehensive plan and to facilitate understanding by the public.

Changes include:

- Developing outcome targets for all comprehensive plan goals which may require capital investments. These outcome targets would go beyond the usual level of service indicators required by concurrency and identify

realistic and achievable targets for all capital facilities.

- Developing 20-year estimates of cost to achieve the proposed outcome targets for all facilities. This is necessary to determine whether the CFP will ever achieve the desired outcomes or not.
- Establishing a clear link between projects and their applicable outcome targets.
- Starting the annual CFP process with a "report card" which indicates the city's progress towards its outcome targets.
- Reformatting the CFP public involvement process to concentrate less on project financing details and more on graphs, charts, and maps that communicate the direction of Olympia's capital investments.

These changes represent an ambitious undertaking by Olympia. Abandoning old CFP paradigms will require perseverance, creativity, and an open mind. But the city council, planning commission, and city staff are committed to the "truth in planning" principles of GMA. And citizens of Olympia are the real winners, assured that their comprehensive plan vision will become a reality.

Your comprehensive plan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater will pay 75 percent of the costs to the county for its adoption of city development standards for unincorporated UGAs. They also will provide continued technical assistance to county staff.

"It is quite a remarkable commitment to carry out this joint system in quite this way," said Krupp. "This approach should, by the time we're through, eliminate a lot of the differences that come up between jurisdictions about the applicability of different standards. It will cut through all of that and enable unincorporated urban growth areas to develop more consistently with each of the cities as they grow."

Growth management hearings boards

Listed below are new cases or action on existing cases before the state's growth management hearings boards.

Central Puget Sound

CASE No. 94-3-0025C STATUS: COMPLIANCE FINDING 12/11/95

Robison, et al. vs. City of Bainbridge Island. Subject: Comprehensive plan and SEPA.

CASE No. 95-3-0008C STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 3/15/96

Vashon-Maury Island, et al. vs. King County. The board found UGAs for Duvall, Carnation, Snoqualmie, North Bend, and Enumclaw are to be modified to include expansion areas. The Bear Creek Island UGA needs to be deleted, justified, or adopted as a fully contained community. The county needs to repeal or justify the county-wide planning policies on five-acre lots on Vashon-Maury Island. Three superior court appeals.

CASE No. 95-3-0011 STATUS: DECISION 2/2/96

Children's Alliance vs. City of Bellevue. Subject: Siting of group homes. The board found the city was not in compliance by the deadline. Sanctions recommended to Governor. Superior court appeal.

CASE No. 95-3-0039C STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 4/3/96

City of Bremerton vs. Kitsap County. Subject: Comprehensive plan and development regulations. Four superior court appeals on October finding of invalidity.

CASE No. 95-3-0040 STATUS: FINDING OF COMPLIANCE 1/11/96

West Seattle Defense Fund vs. City of Seattle. Subject: Development regulations.

CASE No. 95-3-0041 STATUS: SUPERIOR COURT APPEAL

Alberg, et al. vs. King County. Subject: Development regulations.

CASE No. 95-3-0043 STATUS: SUPERIOR COURT APPEAL

Hensley, et al. vs. Snohomish County. Subject: Comprehensive plan, final UGAs, and development regulations.

CASE No. 95-3-0047C STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 3/1/96

Pilchuck Audubon Society, et al. vs. Snohomish County. The board found that no net loss of critical areas is allowed and wetlands must have buffers or a functional equivalent to protect them. Superior court appeal.

CASE No. 95-3-0053 STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 3/4/96

Association to Protect Anderson Creek, et al. vs. City of Bremerton. The board found the comprehensive plan and critical areas ordinance in compliance with the GMA except for three corrections.

CASE No. 95-3-0056 STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 5/13/96

Agriculture for Tomorrow vs. City of Arlington. Subject: Comprehensive plan. The board found the city's comprehensive plan in compliance with the GMA except for two sections. The city was directed to identify open space corridors and to review and provide adequately for draining, flooding, and storm water run-off.

CASE No. 95-3-0071 STATUS: COMPLIANCE DEADLINE 7/22/96

Peninsula Neighborhood Association vs. Pierce County. The county was found in noncompliance in the following areas — rural activity centers, "rural five" zoning allowing accessory dwelling units, rural shoreline density exceptions, and nonconforming use regulations — which were returned for further work.

CASE No. 95-3-0072C STATUS: DECISION 3/25/96

Benaroya, et al. vs. City of Redmond. Subject: Comprehensive plan agricultural designations.

CASE No. 95-3-0073 STATUS: DECISION 4/2/96

West Seattle Defense Fund, et al. vs. City of Seattle. Subject: Comprehensive plan amendments.

CASE No. 95-3-0075C STATUS: DECISION 5/10/96

Hapsmith Co., et al. vs. City of Auburn. Subject: Comprehensive plan.

CASE No. 95-3-0076 STATUS: HEARING 3/27/96

Shulman vs. City of Bellevue. Subject: Land use designations.

CASE No. 95-3-0078 STATUS: DISMISSED 3/15/96

Maxine Kessling vs. King County. Subject: Watershed for the Bear Creek Community Planning Area.

CASE No. 96-3-0001 STATUS: DISMISSED 2/21/96

Sunquist vs. Snohomish County. Subject: Population allocations. Dismissed due to lack of timeliness.

CASE No. 96-3-0005 STATUS: HEARING 5/20/96

A. Litowitz, et al. vs. City of Federal Way. Subject: Comprehensive plan amendments.

CASE No. 96-3-0008 STATUS: HEARING 5/23/96

Baker Commodities Inc. vs. City of Tukwila. Subject: Comprehensive plan and development regulations.

CASE No. 96-3-0009 STATUS: HEARING 5/30/96

A.J. Cole, et al. vs. Pierce County. Subject: Consistency of two ordinances with GMA plan and county-wide planning policies.

CASE No. 96-3-0011 STATUS: HEARING 6/25/96

Martin Hayes vs. Kitsap County. Subject: Interim and final UGAs.

CASE No. 96-3-0012 STATUS: HEARING 6/27/96

HEAL, et al. vs. City of Seattle. Subject: Steep slope regulations.

CASE No. 96-3-0013C STATUS: HEARING 6/12/96

COPAC, et al. vs. King County. Subject: Comprehensive plan amendments.

CASE No. 96-3-0014 STATUS: HEARING 6/19/96

The Hapsmith Co. vs. City of Auburn. Subject: Comprehensive plan amendment.

Western Washington

CASE No. 95-2-0065 STATUS: COMPLIANCE HEARING ON CRITICAL AREAS 5/1/96; COMPLIANCE HEARING ON IUGAs 3/29/96

Friends of Skagit County, et al. vs. Skagit County. The board ruled the county's interim UGAs were invalid. Superior court appeal.

CASE No. 95-2-0073 STATUS: FINDING OF COMPLIANCE 2/22/96

John Diehl et al. vs. Mason County. Subject: Resource lands and interim UGAs.

CASE No. 95-2-0075 STATUS: DECISION 1/22/96

Friends of Skagit County vs. Skagit County. The board returned the county's resource lands and critical areas ordinance for further work.

CASE No. 95-2-0076 STATUS: DISMISSED 12/5/95

Seaview Coast Conservation Coalition vs. Pacific County.

CASE No. 95-2-0078 STATUS: SUPERIOR COURT APPEAL

James Schlatter vs. Clark County. Subject: Property rights.

CASE No. 95-2-0081 STATUS: DECISION 1/3/96

Beckstrom, et al. vs. San Juan County. The board found the county process for adopting an ordinance for the Waldron Island subarea in compliance with the GMA.

CASE No. 95-2-0083 STATUS: DISMISSED 3/15/96

Cedar Park Residents Association, et al. vs. Clallam County. Subject: UGA and urban services and facilities.

CASE No. 96-2-0002 STATUS: HEARING 5/29/96

Taxpayers for Responsible Government vs. City of Oak Harbor. Subject: Comprehensive plan.

CASE No. 96-2-0004 HEARING: 7/17/96

Manke Lumber Co. Inc. et al. vs. Mason County. Subject: Interim UGA.

CASE No. 96-2-0005 STATUS: HEARING 6/5/96

City of Sequim vs. Clallam County. Subject: UGA.

Eastern Washington

CASE No. 94-1-0022 STATUS: COMPLIANCE HEARING 3/5/96

Yakama Indian Nation vs. Kittitas County. Subject: Critical areas' compliance.

CASE No. 95-1-0004 STATUS: DISMISSED

City of East Wenatchee, et al. vs. Douglas County. Subject: UGA.

CASE No. 95-1-0007 STATUS: CONTINUED TO 12/31/96

Kittitas County vs. City of Ellensburg. Subject: Comprehensive plan.

CASE No. 95-1-0008/0009 STATUS: HEARING 3/6/96

City of Ellensburg, et al. vs. Kittitas County. Subject: Agricultural land designation.

CASE No. 95-1-0010 STATUS: HEARING 4/9/96

Gary Woodmansee, et al. vs. Ferry County. Subject: Critical areas, resource lands, and GMA goals.

CASE No. 96-1-0001 STATUS: HEARING 4/30/96

City of College Place vs. Walla Walla County. Subject: Exclusion of a parcel of land from UGA.

CASE No. 96-1-0002 STATUS: HEARING 5/29/96

Wenatchee Valley Mall Partnership, et al. vs. Douglas County. Subject: Critical areas, development regulations, resource lands, and comprehensive plan.

Correction

About Growth, Winter 1995-96. Case No. 95-3-0057, Douglas and Donna Tait, et al. vs. City of Buckley, was not appealed to superior court.

Is growth management working?

By Juli Wilkerson

Director, Tacoma Planning
and Development Services

The city of Tacoma says, "Yes. Growth management is working." It has brought real changes in how the city is growing and, more importantly, in how the community works with government to plan its future.

Tacoma is experiencing renewed interest in the redevelopment of its older neighborhoods and business districts. Citizen interest and participation is on the rise. Many citizens have mastered the new planning terminology and can converse fluently about "mixed use centers," consistency, and concurrency.

It has been nearly three years since Tacoma adopted its comprehensive plan in June 1993 as Washington's first large city to comply with the Growth Management Act. Since that time, the plan has undergone revisions twice through the annual amendment process. With each amendment, the comprehensive plan is being seen more as a living document rather than the "sit upon a shelf" plans of the past.

Tacoma's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1975 and the GMA version did not make major shifts in land use designations. Because of this, the effect of the new comprehensive plan on land use development so far has been subtle, yet very important. The new comprehensive plan provides more protection to established single-family housing areas and designates 15 mixed use centers as growth areas. Tacoma, in partnership with Pierce Transit, is just a few months away from adopting regulations to reshape these mixed use centers to be compact, walkable, and transit-friendly.

Another change that has come about is the number of wetlands that have not been filled for development. Tacoma's critical area regulations have resulted in important wetlands being preserved and protected while still allowing development to occur in a responsible manner.

One of the most positive effects of the comprehensive plan has been in city hall itself. Ongoing interdepartmental teams continue to work on programs and projects that will carry

out the comprehensive plan's policies. Teams work in the areas of transportation, economic development, and capital facilities and have developed several refinements to the comprehensive plan to make it a more meaningful tool for community improvement. Other teams are working on strengthening the links between the comprehensive plan and the budget.

With the comprehensive plan becoming well-grounded in the city organization, our department is embarking on a major initiative for neighborhood planning. An 11-member neighborhoods team was established in January. It will be working with citizen councils in developing neighborhood plans and recommending neighborhood improvements.

The team has been looking at other successful neighborhood planning models and growth management requirements to develop a workable approach. Neighborhood groups are looking forward to customizing the comprehensive plan for their individual communities.



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